

# THE REFORMER.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.—*Jeremiah*, v. 1.

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[From the *Ohio Weekly Register*.]

## POLITICS AND RELIGION.

We have published several documents which go to show that a certain class of individuals are busily and indefatigably engaged in plotting and planning, and devising ways and means to establish an hierarchy in the United States. In this day's paper, their arts and schemes are more fully developed. Their first object is, to suppress the publication of all books, pamphlets, newspapers, &c. which are not superintended by persons of their own stamp; and in order to accomplish this base design, it is *secretly* proposed that a printing press be *first* established at the city of Washington, of a character both "*political and religious*," and to be called *national*—and that so soon as 500,000 dollars are raised, (and by the by, 300,000 dollars have already been procured by these fastidious beggars,) their anti-republican scheme is to be put into execution; and eventually, to locate printing presses in every part of the union, to be under *their* immediate and exclusive control, from which are to be issued, books, pamphlets, newspapers, &c. at so *cheap a rate*, that what their *reverences* please to call anti-religious publications will thereby be forced out of circulation altogether. The aggregate amount of actual *cash* now at the disposal of these ambitious and designing men, is said to exceed the whole amount of capital in the United States' treasury!—and that sum is increasing daily. From whence, it may be asked, came this enormous sum, which will eventually enable these haughty lordlings to ride on the necks of the people? The answer is ready—from *the people*—rich and poor, male and female.

Fellow citizens—do you want a *national religion* established? If you do, give your *money*, liberally, to these *ostensible lovers of souls*, but real lovers of the mammon of unrighteousness, and enemies to religious liberty. If you wish to preserve the liberty of all liberties, that of "worshipping God according to the dictates of your own consciences," withhold your *cash* from these clerical beggars, who "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." Every cent you give them, no matter what their *professed* object may be, goes to the procuring fetters, wherewith to bind your consciences. Beware!—be jealous of your rights, guard them as you would your lives—there is danger: the serpent charms but to destroy.

[From *Priestcraft Exposed*.]

## LEGACIES TO THE CHURCH.

One of the most prolific sources of oppression, was the *mania*, which in various ages prevailed, of bequeathing estates to "the church." The immense sums of money given to "the church" by deluded mortals on leaving this world, added vastly to its power, and with other causes combined, enabled it to load the world with chains more galling than those of Tripoli. To guard against this *mania*, laws\* were made in different countries to prevent

\* It was enacted by Statute 9, Geo. II. c. 36, that no lands or tenements, or money to be laid out thereon, shall be given for or charged with any charitable uses whatsoever, unless by deed indented, executed in the presence of two witnesses, *twelve calendar months* before the death of the donor, and enrolled in the Court of Chancery within six months after its execution. [This law was found necessary in England, to prevent the clergy from amassing the wealth of the nation.]

the rapacity of "the church" from fastening upon all the circulating medium. If we mistake not, the time is not distant in which the people of the United States will be obliged to protect themselves from these *robbers of death-beds*, by an appeal to the legislature of our country.\* Something must be done, and well done too, and that quickly.

We would ask the advocates of this system, what *holiness* there can be in depriving lawful heirs of their rights to bestow it upon others? Is there any piety in a man's taking *money*, which in fact belongs to his children, or immediate relations, and bequeathing it to strangers? Although the money is given to what the *receivers* please to call "Benevolent Societies"—and to fill the "Lord's Treasury"—yet it is a well known fact, that the *societies* they allude to, are got up expressly to foster clerical indolence—and that the "Lord's Treasury" is the name they blasphemously give their *own pockets*.

While thousands in our country are growing up without being taught even to read and write—is it not surprising that *rational* men can be prevailed upon to make so gross a misapplication of their money, as to give it to *manufacture priests*, and to support them after they are made? Such an astonishing perversion inclines us to the belief, that any man induced thus to squander his money, is not in his right mind—indeed he cannot be, and be

\* A Law was proposed by the General Court of Massachusetts last year, (whether it passed or not, we cannot say) entitled, "*An act regulating gifts and grants for pious and charitable uses.*" And enacts, among other things, that all *devises, bequests, deeds and conveyances*, for any pious or charitable uses, which shall not be made a certain number of months before the death of the testator or donor, shall be null and void.

By means of bequests and other donations, the revenue of the Spanish clergy is more than the income of the government!! How many years before this will be the case in this country, if the iron hand of the law is not placed on the doings of these men?

guilty of the act. We are led to these remarks from the following communication in the Home Missionary—

"*Bequest of the late Joseph Burr.*—We regret to learn that four of the heirs at law, of the estate of the late *Joseph Burr*, Esq. of Manchester, have appealed from the decision of the Probate Court, approving of his will, by which so large an amount was bequeathed to Benevolent Societies and Literary Institutions. For what good reason this appeal has been made, we are not informed. The effect of it will be, at least, to delay the appropriation of several bequests to the purposes for which they were intended by the philanthropic donor."

The whole amount of the bequest mentioned in the Missionary Herald, is 91,400 dollars, most of which has been given, not to "Benevolent Societies" or "Literary Institutions," but to *build up a hierarchy in this free country!* Such bequests should be discountenanced, as they are fraught with the greatest ills to mankind; and most sincerely do we pray that the heirs may succeed in breaking up this ill-advised and pernicious legacy.

It is not very surprising that persons when weak in body and mind, should be induced to *deprive* their families and friends of a competency, for the purpose of *giving* it to others, if flattered and urged by men who can use the following language in public with impunity. We allude to an address of the Rev. Beriah Green, at the meeting of the Auxiliary Foreign Missionary Society of Rutland co. Vermont, from which we extract—

"Men who confess that their lives were bought with the redeeming agonies of the *Son of God*, instead of devoting those dearly purchased lives to his service, spend their days and nights in heaping up dust—in raking together the straws of the dung-hill. They can inquire about the markets, and study the interest table, and with *tearful anxiety* divide 'their living' among their children, while the *groans of a dying world* are urged in vain upon their ears!"

"Thanks be to God, a few—the Lord increase their number an hundred fold—a few have begun to taste the luxury of 'doing good.' Would you hear the story



of a plain man of this stamp? All along his reputation for christian piety had been good and fair; all along he had given what he could *conveniently* spare, to promote the interests of Zion. It was a pleasant morning in the month of May, when his wife and children were gathered around him. \* \* \* \* \* 'Know, my sons and daughters, that henceforth when ye see your father labour and deny himself, it is not that he may add field to field—that he may augment an estate to afford you the means of sensual gratification when he is dead—to be a *bait to lure your souls into a fatal snare*. \* \* \* \* \* Henceforth my time, my influence, my substance are devoted to \* \* \* \* \* the interests of the Church.' [Pious man, to take his children's bread and cast it to—priests.] This man held on his way. The pages of his history were one continual illustration of the Saviour's memorable words:—'*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*' When he died, it was an easy thing to settle his estate. **IT HAD BEEN SENT ON TO HEAVEN AND TRANSMUTED TO ETERNAL GOLD."**

This blasphemy, this impudent falsehood, was preached before a "missionary society"—and has so far received the sanction of the *fraternity*, as to be published in a pamphlet, called "Missionary Paper, No. 9." Comment on such sayings—on the pretensions of any men who profess to have the power of "transmuting" bequests into "*eternal Gold*," and despatching it "on to Heaven" before the donor—is useless; they speak intelligibly for themselves. These gentlemen not only have power it seems to "transmute" Gold, but also of sending it on to Heaven! One Luther Rice pretended, some years since, to have control of the angel Gabriel. In a fit of ecstasy, at the close of a begging sermon, he rolled his eyes up towards heaven, and exclaimed, "stop Gabriel, stop, till you have witnessed the generosity of this assembly!!"

To close, we again urge the importance of breaking up such bequests as the one before us, and do sincerely hope the "four heirs" will persevere, and leave no stone unturned, to strip the *death-bed robbers of their ill gotten gains*.

[From the *Christian Intelligencer*.]

#### CHARITY INSULTED BY PRIDE.

The following letter, relating to the disposition made of some of the gifts presented to the divinity students at Bangor by the yeomanry of our country, comes to us from a respectable source, and we have no doubt of it being strictly correct. We give it a place in order to show the honest people who make contributions for the Bangor students, what will become of their charitable presents, if not of the richest order and according to the finest fashions of the day. It seems that if the garments presented are not better than the people who furnish them wear on their own backs, they are stowed away in some old garret, and given to the rats and moths. Is such the insufferable pride of those who are learning to assume the humble character of ministers of the meek and lowly Jesus?

Bangor, Feb. 23, 1829.

DEAR SIR,—I send you a few facts, which you are at liberty to use as you think proper.

There are many of our good farmers who, supposing from what information they have received that the *Institution* in this place were in want of food and clothing for the students, have, in their liberality, sent them various articles of clothing. Among these articles there were seventeen waistcoats which were once good and comfortable, though home-spun. Owing to this latter circumstance, probably, they were *rejected*, and *stowed away in a garret*, where they have been *eaten, spoiled and ruined by the moths!*

Yours, &c.

Another respectable friend assures us that he has seen the articles himself, almost consumed by the moths, and informs us of the building where they are secretly stowed away. Now such things ought to be known. We trust the facts will come to the knowledge of every man and woman who have laboured to manufacture the garments thus shamefully destroyed.—Query. Have the young ladies' bed-quilts, pillow-cases, &c. been any more honorably disposed of?

## EDUCATED PRIESTS.

[The following extracts from the writings of WILLIAM LAW, deserve the consideration of the Christian public at the present time.]

"As the practice of all churches, for many ages, has had so much recourse to learning, art, and science, to qualify ministers for the preaching of the gospel, as if it was *merely* a work of man's wisdom, so ecclesiastics, for the most part, come forth in the power of human qualifications, and are more or less full of themselves, and trusting to their own ability, according as they are more or less proficient in science and literature, languages, and rhetoric.

"To this, more than to any other cause, is the *great apostacy* of all christendom to be attributed. This was the door, at which the *whole spirit* of the world entered into possession of the christian church.

"Worldly lusts and interests, vanity, pride, envy, contention, bitterness, and ambition, (the death of all that is good in the soul) have now, and always had their chief nourishment, power, and support, from a sense of the merit and sufficiency of literal accomplishments.

"Humility, meekness, patience, faith, hope, contempt of the world, and heavenly affections, (the very life of Jesus in the soul) are by few people less earnestly desired, or more hard to be practised, than by great *wits, classical critics, linguists, historians, and orators* in holy orders.

"The labour of the preacher is, for the most part, to display logic, argument, and eloquence upon religious subjects; and so he is just as much *carried out* of himself, and *united* to God by his own religious discourses; as the pleader at the bar is by his law and oratory upon right and wrong. And the hearers, by their regarding such accomplishments, go away just as much helped to be new men in Christ Jesus, as by hearing a cause of great equity well pleaded at the bar."

[From the Reading Chronicle.]

*To the Republican Citizens of Reading and its vicinity.*

Beware of sowing the seeds of aristocracy, or mingling distinction or superstition with the education of your youths. The nobility of England found a difficulty in discriminating between the high born, and the tillers of the ground and the industrious part of community; and actually introduced a bill into the house of parliament to prevent the latter from wearing a particular badge or ribbon, that should be set apart for the former. Now Americans, look and think for yourselves. Our happy government depends altogether on the equal and liberal education of the rising generation; distinction ruins all republics. I see in your streets a number of lads in uniform as military dress, and being informed they belonged to a particular school in your town, and that that school was conducted by a clergyman, the idea struck me very forcibly that such marks of distinction was not calculated to meet the views of our excellent constitution. A little band of soldiers, with a fine dress, distinguished from their fellow children, creates a false pride, and after receiving the first principles of their education under such a dress, and under the direction of the most superstitious part of our country, they are ill calculated to bring their young minds down to a level with their fellow students in plain dress, and are more illy calculated for industrious pursuits, which is the wealth and happiness of all republican governments.

Fellow citizens, I look at this in another point of view. All despotic governments have established churches and clergy, under whose direction their youths are placed. What is the result? very plain to be seen; the kings, by the help of their clergy, govern and live in ease and luxury, whilst the young and industrious part of the community are taught only to obey, even at the expense of their innocent blood. We Americans are at peace



with the world, and God grant we may keep so. The only passport to prosperity and happiness is to keep our youths free from bigotry and superstition. Bring them up to some industrious and honest employment, which will keep them free from dissipation. Learn them to govern themselves, and our government will continue the happiest in the world.

*A friend to equal rights.*

[From the *Mechanics' Free Press*.]

#### CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES.

*Messrs. Editors*,—There are subjects in which every man feels a deeper interest than he does in others, and which engross his greatest care and most anxious solicitude; but as Americans there is no subject which so much interests us, as the subject of our "civil and religious liberties."—We should brood over them with the most jealous care, the remembrance of what they cost, and "the catastrophe of other nations," should teach us to hold them sacred as life itself—for, divested of liberty, what is life? Our fathers have written in letters of blood, "'tis worse than death."

The disposition lately evinced by a certain portion of our citizens (I do not allude to the petitioners, but to the originators of the scheme) to infringe on the rights and liberties of our citizens, is too flagrant to be doubted by an impartial observer.

Although the petitions to Congress on the subject of "Sabbath mails" have not been granted, yet we perceive that plans so deeply laid, and so zealously pursued, are not to be quietly abandoned. We are given to understand that other measures are to be resorted to; that a religious party in politics must govern the polls—these expressions are sufficiently intelligible of themselves without comment.

A MECHANIC.

#### RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES.

If there is any right sacred beyond all others, because it imparts everlast-

ing consequences, it is the right to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience. Whoever attempts to narrow it down in any degree, to limit it by the decree of any sect, bound the exercise of private judgment, or free inquiry, by the standard of his own faith, be he priest or layman, ruler or subject, dishonors so far the profession of Christianity, and wounds it in its vital virtues. The doctrine on which such attempts are founded, goes to the destruction of all free institutions of government. There is not a truth to be gathered from history more momentous than this, that civil liberty cannot long be separated from religious liberties without danger, and ultimately without the destruction of both. Whenever religious liberties exist, it will, first or last, bring in and establish political liberty.—Whenever it is suppressed, the church establishment will, first or last, become the engine of despotism, and overthrow, unless it be itself overthrown, every vestige of political right.

*Judge Story.*

#### THE CONTEST NOT OVER.

If the predictions of some Editors are true, a certain class are not disheartened in their attempts to stop the Sunday Mails, but will renew their endeavors to force their religion, or rather irreligion, upon the community, by the power of law. Let all true friends to civil and religious liberty be on their guard. On that day when Congress shall consent to legislate upon religion, let every free man array himself in the dress of sorrow, and attend the funeral of liberty, for liberty will then die. We hope for better things. Let us be prepared for the worst, and ready to resist it. To the opinion already expressed, we subjoin that of the Editor of the Salem Courier.

*Sunday Mails*.—It is pretty sure, judging from the remarks on Sunday in the "*Spirit of the Pilgrims*" [an orthodox paper at Boston] that another and vigorous

essay will be made to prevent the transportation of the mails on Sunday. Proselytes will be sought—exclusive foraging parties will scour the country, and an unequalled attempt will be made to make the civil power bow to the religious tenets and opinions of a sect.

[*Boston Trumpet.*]

[*From the New York Telescope.*]

### SALEM WITCHCRAFT—AGAIN.

*From a work entitled, "An account of the European Settlements in America."*

When the New England Puritans began to breathe a little from their dissensions, and had their hands tied up from persecuting the Quakers and Anabaptists, they fell not long after into another madness of a yet more extraordinary and dangerous kind, which, like some epidemical disease, ran through the whole country, and is perhaps one of the most extraordinary delusions recorded in history. This tragedy began in the year 1692.

There is a town in Massachusetts called Salem. One Paris was the minister there. He had two daughters troubled with convulsions; which being attended with some of those extraordinary appearances, not unfrequent in such disorders, he imagined they were bewitched. As soon as he concluded upon witchcraft as the cause of the distemper, the next inquiry was to find out the person who bewitched them. He cast his eye upon an Indian servant woman of his own, whom he frequently beat, and used her with such severity, that she at last confessed herself the witch, and was committed to jail, where she lay for a long time.

The imaginations of the people were not sufficiently heated to make a very formal business of this; therefore they were content to discharge her from prison after a long confinement, and to sell her as a slave, for her fees. However, as this example set the discourse about witchcraft afloat, some people troubled with a similar complaint, began to fancy them-

selves bewitched too. Persons in an ill state of health are naturally fond of finding out causes for their distempers; especially such as are extraordinary, and call the eyes of the public upon them. There was perhaps something of malice in the affair besides. For one of the first objects whom they fixed upon was a Mr. Burroughs, a gentleman who had formerly been minister of Salem; but upon some of the religious disputes which divided the country, he differed from his flock and left them. This man was tried, with two others, for witchcraft, by a special commission of oyer and terminer, directed to some gentlemen of the best fortunes, and reputed to be of the best understanding in the country. Before these judges a piece of evidence was delivered, the most weak and childish, the most repugnant to itself, and to common sense, that perhaps ever was known upon any serious occasion.—Yet by those judges, upon that evidence, and the verdict founded upon it, this minister, a man of a most unexceptionable character, and two others, men irreproachable in their life, were sentenced to die, and accordingly hanged. Then these victims of the popular madness were stript naked, and their bodies thrown into a pit, half covered with earth, and left to the dissection of the birds and wild beasts. Upon the same evidence in a little time after, sixteen more suffered death, the greatest part of them dying in the most exemplary sentiments of piety, and with the strongest professions of their innocence. One man, refusing to plead, suffered in the cruel manner the law directs on that occasion, by a slow pressure to death.

The imagination of the people, powerfully affected by these shocking examples, turned upon nothing but the most gloomy and horrid ideas. The most ordinary and innocent actions were metamorphosed into magical ceremonies, and the fury of the people augmented in proportion as this gloom of imagination increased. The



flame spread with rage and rapidity into every part of the country. Neither the tenderness of youth, nor the infirmity of age, nor the sacredness of the ministry, nor the respective condition of fortune or character, was the least protection. Children of eleven years old were taken up for sorceries. The women were stript in the most shameful manner, for magical teats. The scorbutic stains, common on the skins of old persons, were called the devil's pinches. This was indisputable evidence against them. As such they admitted every idle flying report, and even stories of ghosts, which they honored with a name not found in our law books. They called them *spectral evidence*.

What these extraordinary testimonies wanted was completed by torture, by which a number of these unhappy victims were driven to confess whatever their tormentors thought proper to dictate to them. Some women owned they had been lain with the devil, and other things equally ridiculous and abominable.

It is not difficult to imagine the deplorable state of the province, when men's lives depended upon the caprice and folly of distracted minds; when revenge and malice had a full opportunity of wreaking themselves in a most dreadful and bloody manner, by an instrument that was always in readiness, and to which the public phrenzy gave a certain and dangerous effect. What was yet a worse circumstance, the wretches who suffered the torture, being not more pressed to own themselves guilty than to discover their associates and accomplices, unable to give any real account, named people at random, who were immediately taken up and treated in the same cruel manner, upon this extorted evidence. An universal terror and consternation seized on all; some prevented accusation, and charged themselves with witchcraft, and so escaped death. Others fled the province; and many more were preparing to fly. The prisons

were crowded; people were executed daily; yet the rage of the accusers was as fresh as ever, and the number of witches and bewitched increased every hour. A magistrate who had committed forty persons for this crime, fatigued with so disagreeable an employment, and ashamed of the share he had in it, refused to grant any more warrants. He was himself accused of sorcery; and thought himself happy in leaving his family and fortune, and escaping with life out of the province. A jury, struck with the affecting manner, and the solemn assurances of innocence, of a woman brought before them, ventured to acquit her; but the judges sent them in again, and in an imperious manner forced them to find the woman guilty, and she was hanged immediately.

The magistrates and ministers whose prudence ought to have been employed in healing this distemper, and assuaging its fury, threw in new combustible matter. They encouraged the accusers, they assisted at the examinations, and they extorted the confession of witches. None signalized their zeal more upon this occasion than Sir Wm. Phipps, the Governor, a New England man, of the lowest birth, and yet sudden meaner education; who having raised a fortune by a lucky accident, was Knighted, and afterwards made governor of the province. Dr. Increase Mather, and Dr. Cotton Mather, the pillars of the New England Church, were equally sanguine. Several of the most popular ministers, after twenty executions had been made, addressed Sir Wm. Phipps with thanks for what he had done, and with exhortations to proceed in so laudable a work.

The accusers, encouraged in this manner, did not know where to stop, nor how to proceed. They were at a loss for objects. They began at last to accuse the judges themselves.—What was worse, the nearest relations of Mr. Increase Mather were involved, and witchcraft began even to approach the governor's family. It was now high

time to give it another turn. The accusers were discouraged by authority. One hundred and fifty, who lay in prison, were discharged. Two hundred more were under accusation; they were passed over; and those who had received sentence of death, were reprieved, and in due time pardoned. A few cool moments showed them the gross and stupid error that had carried them away, and which was utterly invisible to them all the while they were engaged in this strange persecution. They grew heartily ashamed of what they had done, but what was infinitely mortifying, the Quakers took occasion to attribute all this mischief to a judgment on them for persecution. A general fast was appointed; praying God to pardon all the errors of his servants and people in the late tragedy, raised among them by Satan and his instruments. This was the last paroxysm of the puritanic enthusiasm in N. England. This violent fit carried off so much of that humour, that the people there are grown somewhat like the rest of mankind in their manners, and have much abated of their persecuting spirit.

It is not an incurious speculation to consider these remarkable sallies of the human mind out of its ordinary course. Whole nations are often carried away by what would never influence one man of sense. The cause is originally weak, and not to be suppressed without great difficulty; but then its weakness prevents suspicion of the mischief, until it is too late to think of suppressing it at all. In such cases, the more weak, improbable, and inconsistent any story is, the more powerful and general is its effect, being helped on by design in some, by folly in others, and kept up by contagion in all. The more extraordinary the design, the more dreadful the crime, the less we examine into the proofs. The charge and the evidence of some things is the same. However, in time the minds of people cool, and they are astonished how they ever came to be so affected.

*For the Reformer.*

### KEEPING THE SABBATH.

A man by the name of Alvin H. Parker, was ordained over a Presbyterian church in the lower township of Cape May, about four years since. Among the several duties he enjoined on his hearers, the holy Sabbath was repeatedly urged, and even urged with Jewish strictness. He told his hearers that every time they loaded their vessels on the seventh day and sailed, that they might be on their way to Philadelphia on the Sabbath, they violated God's sacred command. Every concern pertaining to this life, except cases of pure necessity, must be suspended to sanctify the Sabbath. He even recommended the execution of the civil law against the transgressors; but mark how deep the sacred impression, which he so strenuously urged upon his hearers, was made on his own mind. In the month of May last, this teacher of God's sacred commands, preached a sermon to his hearers on Sabbath morning, and immediately went home, engaged a passage in a pilot boat, packed his change of clothes, and the boat sailed with him by the middle of the afternoon, for Philadelphia.

Some time in the summer he again preached a sermon on Sabbath morning, and after the close mounted his carriage and rode to the Court House, a distance of about ten miles, that he might be there to take the stage for Philadelphia the next morning, when a regular line runs by his house every Monday morning for Philadelphia. In the month of November or December last, a vessel came on shore. An agent was sent to take charge of her. After the business was adjusted, the agent and captain made arrangements to go to Philadelphia by stage on Monday morning. After meeting on the Sabbath, this preacher of holy time had an interview with a bosom friend, who makes no pretensions to sacred impressions. They both wished to go to Philadelphia on business, and they



concluded to furnish a carriage, invite the above named agent and captain to go with them, and their passage money would defray the expenses of the journey. Accordingly, the preacher set out two hours before sun-setting, and rode four miles to see those men, whom they proposed to themselves to pay the expenses of the journey, while his bosom friend prepared the carriage and made other necessary arrangements.

We have here an illustration of the difference between the doctrines and the practice of men-made preachers, and of their designs to compel their hearers to strictly observe what their practice shows they do not believe to be a duty, or believing it a duty disregard it. Do they indeed believe that the national Sabbath of the Jews, under any modification, is binding on us? They tell us that Jesus Christ is a complete Saviour, and that his dispensation is a perfect dispensation; but there is not an intimation in his gospel, or the history of his life, which carries with it the least appearance of a command to observe any day as a Sabbath, under the law of grace which he has established. If we observe any day, it must be from expediency, and not from Christ's commands. Will any of these modern scribes say that Christ has made one seventh part of time more holy than the rest? or that he has granted a license of indulgence to us to do that in six days which would be sacrilegious on the seventh? If our well being in eternity depends on our improvement of time in this life, we must conclude that all time is holy—that we have not a moment which is not holy and peculiarly interesting to us.

Perhaps some may be ready to ask what motive can they have by enjoining that on the people, which they do not believe themselves? Questions of this nature are more easily asked than answered. We can judge of their motives only from collateral evidence.—Should we look into the history of oth-

er nations, we shall find the clergy felt it their interest to control the civil government. Should we spread the conduct of the Presbyterian clergy in our own country before us, since the days of the elder Adams, we shall find their unwearied exertions to obtain a control over the minds of the people, in whose hands are deposited the sovereign control of government. A rallying point is necessary to effect their object, and it is a matter of no consequence what that point is. If they can make the public opinion submit to any one point they shall assume, the object is gained. The same ascendancy over the minds of men, closely pursued, will at length carry all the rest. It is a matter of no consequence whether that position is rational or the most absurd imaginable. When once a breach is made into the fortress the citadel will be carried by perseverance. Various positions have been assumed and pressed with the strongest possible exertions.

The clergy attempted to over-rule the election of Thomas Jefferson, by predicting that he would cause the meeting-houses to be burnt, and the Bibles to be destroyed.\* They have obtained a control over our literary institutions, and converted them into a nursery of catechumens. They have introduced begging societies to amass wealth, under the ostensible object of spreading the gospel, and are educating poor children in their favorite creeds. And of late, we hear them recommending a "*christian party in politics*," and "*Pioneer Lines*," to enforce the observation of the Sabbath. All these projects we may consider as points of attack which they are determined to press with vigor. If they gain one, they will be enabled to press the others with increased force. When once

\* An acquaintance of mine, who lived in Woodbury in 1800, informed me that he knew a pious priest-ridden woman, who, on hearing that Jefferson was elected president, went into the woods and hid her Bible in a hollow tree.

they have obtained their object, where will be that liberty of conscience, in relation to our Maker, which our constitution guarantees? Look into Spain and read the character of the United States.

CAPE MAY.

## BLUE LAWS IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

[From a New York paper of April 4.]

In an extra meeting held by the Common Council on the evening of the 31st ult.

"On motion of Mr. Strong, the Mayor was authorized to appoint two *special Marshals* in each ward for enforcing the due observance of the Sabbath—the Marshals to act under the direction of the alderman and assistant of each ward."

We are not *in doubt* here as to the spirit of the people, and would proffer a friendly hint to the corporation and their "*Marshals*," to use *special* caution in their proceedings under the above decree. Supposing, as we must suppose, the mover of the above resolution, and all the assenters to it, to be Presbyterians, and signers of the old Sabbath law petition, we are in some doubt whether all the organists of the Episcopal churches are not in danger of arrest next *Sabbath day*.

We would ask under what pretext, or in virtue of what principle, privilege of office, or right of commission, the corporation of this city make such enactments? *Enforce* the "due observance of the Sabbath"! How? With the bayonet or the constable? Truly, we would recommend the former, both as the more appropriate representative of tyranny in general, and as more consistent with the matter and style of the enactment in question. And so, in the 29th year of the 19th century, in the city of New York, "two *special Marshals*," specially appointed by the Mayor, are to decide in each ward of said city, what "is a *due* observance of the Sabbath," and to "*enforce*" the same by their own special authority in conjunction with that of an alderman and such assistance as he may find neces-

sary! We beg to felicitate the good people of this city on their rights of conscience and self-government; more especially the Jews, heretics, and unbelievers, whom, we have reason to think, form a very large portion of the population, and who may possibly on the next Christian Sabbath, be driven to church in flocks before the special marshals of the honorable Mayor and Corporation.

## IMPORTANT INTELLIGENCE.

[From the Marietta (Pa.) Pioneer.]

### RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

The "*Lancaster Eagle*" of April 1, contains the proceedings at length of a very large and highly respectable meeting, held in Cocalico township, for the purpose of taking into consideration the attempts made, and now being made, to destroy or infringe upon the religious liberties of our country. As the proceedings are very long and the address diffuse in its detail, we merely condense the following brief expose of them for the information of our readers.

At a very large and respectable meeting, held on the 19th of March last, at the house of Benjamin Habershtick, in Cocalico township, Lancaster county, for the purpose of taking into consideration the dangerous effects of priestcraft, as lately evinced in the attempts made by a worldly or corrupted priesthood to enslave the minds of the people,

JACOB BUCHER was appointed president, JOHN FISHER and BENJAMIN HACKLER, Vice Presidents; and Henry Reinhold and Samuel Gilsinger, were chosen secretaries. Whereupon, a committee of nine persons was appointed to draft an address and resolutions expressive of the sense of the meeting. They withdrew, and after sometime reported an excellent and appropriate address, with resolutions attached, which were unanimously adopted. The address shows the pernicious effects of a connexion between church and state, and shows



also, that, in every age of the world, from the time of our Saviour down to our own times, whenever priests got power into their hands they reduced the people to the worst kind of slavery: viz—the slavery of mind, &c. &c.

Among the resolutions are the following:—

“That we already begin to feel the dangerous and pernicious effects of a worldly and corrupted priesthood, and will, by every proper means, oppose them in their numerous schemes of proselyting, &c.

“That we deem it the serious and bounden duty of every man in the union, who values the liberty of conscience, to step boldly forward, and by every proper means oppose the schemes of a corrupted and self-interested priesthood, who, by forming societies without number, which they term religious, such as Bible, missionary, Sunday school and tract societies, and theological seminaries, calculate to drain our purses, rob us of our liberty of conscience, and endanger the continuance of our republican institutions.

“That we will not hereafter permit any preacher who is ruled by any theological seminary, or who is a member of a Bible, missionary, Sunday school, tract, or other such society, to preach in our houses of worship; because we deem all those begging schemes injurious to the well-being of society.

“That Benjamin Haberstick, Jacob Reinhold, Michael Klein, Jr. Henry Reinhold and Samuel Lutz, of Lancaster county, and John Sohl, Daniel Bechtel, John Fisher, John Klobb and David Wenrich, of Berks county, be a committee of correspondence, whose duty it shall be to keep a vigilant eye on the numerous schemes which a corrupted priesthood have invented to enslave our minds, and to correspond with similar committees which may be appointed on this important subject. Also, to call meetings of the people, whenever they may deem such meetings necessary to advance the objects of this meeting.”

The meeting appointed a committee of vigilance, consisting of upwards of 130 persons, who all have signed their names to the proceedings.

The proceedings are signed also by the officers of the meeting, and a particular request is made, that they be published by editors of papers in the state generally. As we have but a German copy of them, and do not feel ourselves able to attempt a correct translation, as also on account of the length, we give the above notice in lieu of a full publication. The Sunday mail people, and the “christian party in politics,” will hardly succeed well among our honest German farmers. They will scarcely find a people in the Union more jealous of their liberties than that class, of which was composed the foregoing meeting.

[From the *National Gazette*.]

A writer in the New York Evening Post makes the following remarks—

Hitherto, in this country, a man's house has been considered as emphatically *his castle*; into which no person could come and not any thing be introduced without his consent. But it appears that the “New York Religious Tract Society,” which is auxiliary to the “American Tract Society,” has determined that every family in this city shall be furnished with a tract *monthly*. What gives *them* a right to exercise this *general* supervision, or to assume these *general* titles, I am at a loss to know. For these societies so far from being *general* are *principally* under control of *one* denomination of Christians. The *Roman Catholics*, *Methodists*, *Episcopalians*, and others, have tract societies of their own, and, with *few exceptions*, do not unite in these societies. They profess not to be *sectarian*. And yet a tract on the “Sabbath” which they have been circulating, contains many sentiments diametrically opposite to those avowed in an extract recently published in the Evening Post from the works of Bish-

op White, of Philadelphia, of the Episcopal Church.

The fact is, the leaders in these general societies are over-doing the business. They are governing too much. Men will not be forced to be either religious or moral. The indiscreet efforts of these partisans of religion and morality, are exciting a *re-action* most injurious to the interests of both.

The fact is, that it is high time for every individual to guard his personal rights—his right of acting religiously and morally according to the doctrines of his own conscience, provided he does not violate the laws—against the attempts of self-created societies to coerce him into their views of religion, and their habits of morals; and thus to establish a spiritual and moral inquisition of the worst kind. Of the morals of the community the *law* to a certain extent is the guardian. And religion and morality are both best promoted by *individual* precept, admonition and example.

#### "DR." ELY'S DEFENCE.

The "Rev. E. S. Ely," (as was engraved on his door, and then put on his gate) after preaching and publishing a sermon, the whole bearing of which was the election of religious rulers in our land, and in which he expressly proposed the formation of a "christian party in politics," on finding the people awakened to see the schemes in progress for their subjugation, has, within the last month, come out in one of the daily papers of this city, expressly and peremptorily denying any such wish as to unite church and state, or to establish a particular sect in this country. Nay further, says this professed minister of the meek and lowly Saviour, "so far am I from desiring any establishment of any religious system by either the national or state legislatures, that I would not only write, and preach, and pray against such establishment of any one ecclesiastical denomination, but if needful would *bear a musket, or use the sword*

*of defence* against any one who should, by force of arms, invade our rights." Now, whether we shall soon see this "descendant of the Puritans,"\* as he calls himself, bearing a *musket* or using *the sword*, we know not. We cannot, however, suppose he would feel much concern about using them for any other rights but his own or the rights of Presbyterianism.

As we have given "Dr." Ely some notoriety, and published a part of his sermon, he has condescended to notice us in his attempted defence. In answer to a letter received from a Mr. Montgomery of Danville, Va. informing him of charges made against him in the *Reformer*, he says: "The accusations of the *Reformer*, to which you refer, I have never seen; and few people I believe in Philadelphia, would think it necessary to contradict any thing which it might assert, because here its character is well known." The "Dr." can hit upon the truth sometimes, for we are now going on the tenth year of the *Reformer* in this city, and of course its character it is presumed, is pretty well known here; and the people moreover are sensible, that if the statements that have appeared from time to time in the *Reformer* could be contradicted, with any semblance of truth, it would have been done long ago: for those opposed to the work here, are not in want of papers to do it in, nor in want of a will or disposition to do it. It is only because we have been especially careful not to publish any thing but facts, that silence has been imposed on them so long. And what do all "Dr." Ely's denials amount to? What is the forming of a "*christian party in politics*," as the "Dr." proposed in his sermon, but endeavouring to get christian politicians into power and authority in the state? Church and state will then be united and act in unison, each

\* These "Puritans," by the by, are the people who once in New England, whipped, cut off the ears, and hung conscientious people of the Society of Friends.



lending its aid to uphold the other, as in England, Spain, and other countries.

We do not, therefore, deem it necessary to contradict what "Dr." Ely has said about not desiring a union of church and state, because it is sufficiently contradicted by himself in his sermon, as any one may see for himself, if he will take the trouble to read it or the extracts from it in our September number of 1827. Besides, what is all this work of petitioning Congress to stop the Mails, &c. on Sunday, but to get the secular power to support and enforce the religious views and sentiments of the church? If this be not endeavouring to unite church and state, we ask what is? We will here copy a reply to "Dr." Ely's defence, inserted in the same paper in which his defence appeared.

[From the American Sentinel.]

MESSRS. P. HAY & Co.—It seems "Dr." Ely feels himself very much annoyed by the re-action produced against himself on account of the sentiments expressed in his sermon of July 4th, 1827, and would wish to allay the excitement by asserting that he is wholly opposed to a *union of Church and State*. Those who have read his sermon will be able to judge of its sentiments, and give the credit to his assertions to which they are entitled.—But "Dr." Ely does not stand alone. Similar sentiments to those contained in his sermon, have been advanced by others, who are disposed to make the same positive assertions that they are not desiring a union of church and state. The question may here be asked, What is the use for persons to say they do not desire the union of church and state, when they are repeatedly urging the state and national authorities to aid and assist them (by pains and penalties of course) in enforcing their sentiments and views, with respect to religious duties and observances? If this is not seeking a union of church and state, or in other words, endeavouring to bring the state to act in unison with, or to aid, the church by law, I know not what is. Their endeavouring to get the Legislature of New York to stop the running of canal boats on Sunday, the Legislature of New Jersey last session to prohibit the running of steam-boats on that day, and the late attempt to get Congress to enact a law to stop the transportation of the Mail and

opening of Post Offices on what they call the "Lord's day," are all irrefragable proofs that they do covet and seek the aid and assistance of the state to coerce people into a compliance with what they call religious duties. Will any man in his sober senses say this is not the case? There cannot be a more positive fact in existence, and yet the most active agents in these attempts will come forward and say we do not desire a union of church and state, but are wholly opposed to it.

Had these men been content to proclaim from the pulpit that it was a most heinous sin to travel on Sunday, move a mail, or go to the post-office, and made a rule of discipline that every one that did so should be excommunicated, and put the decree into immediate execution on every offender, no one would think of accusing them of seeking to unite church and state.—But to resort to the secular power of the states, or the general government, for legislative acts to enforce an observance of what they call religious duties, is to all intents and purposes trying to unite church and state, as every man in the country might know who is capable of thinking correctly on the subject. To deny it betrays want of rationality or great blindness.

With regard to what "Dr." Ely has insinuated concerning any thing asserted in the *Reformer*, and of its character being well known, we shall excuse him, as our readers are sufficiently satisfied on this head, and are too well informed not to know that if we asserted or published any thing not true, the inaccuracy would soon be exposed and proclaimed abroad; for the clergy here are not in want of writers or papers to do it by, nor are they without a disposition to do it were they able. We are therefore under no necessity to enter upon a *defence* of the character of the *Reformer*, or of what is contained in it; for it will soon be known, and pretty extensively, when we publish any thing that is not true. THEOPHILUS R. GATES.

It seems very convenient at this time for "Dr." Ely and his partisans to come out and deny that they are endeavouring to unite church and state, in order to lull the people again into security—for they have hastened matters on rather too fast; and people have been awakened to a sense of their danger, and to the schemes in progress for their subjugation. Whether they will be able to allay the excitement, time

must show. They have found that the population of this country are not yet quite so fast bound in their fetters as they had supposed, and that they are not disposed to yield up their rights without making some struggle to preserve them. They wish therefore to quiet them a little longer, till their chains are more securely fastened, and then they will not have so much occasion to lull their suspicions by making strong assertions; as they can enjoy the satisfaction of seeing them awake to their danger without the possibility of escaping it, and of struggling for their rights when the time has gone by that they might have preserved them.

[From the Christian Baptist.]

#### PRESBYTERIAN STATISTICS.

*PRESBYTERIANISM aims at high things, and will yet be on the throne in America, if the Millennium does not soon arrive.*

From the last enumeration of the Presbyterian Israel, and from the late proclamation of the Right Reverend Ezra Stiles Ely, D. D. which appeared lately in "The Philadelphian," and which has been repromulgated in "The Western Luminary," it is fairly to be presumed that this learned and wealthy church expects, like Pharaoh's lean kine, to devour all the fat and well favoured kine which will browse, some half a century hence, on all the hills from Maine to Florida, and from the splendid mansion of "Rev. Ezra Styles Ely," to the Rocky Mountains. I have not room for the whole Report, else I would gladly give it. I will give an extract from it, that it may be heard speaking for itself.

"There are probably fifteen baptised members, who are pew holders, supporters of, and attendants on, public worship in our Presbyterian churches, for every communicant in our connexion; and if so, then our body in the United States contains 2,194,620 persons. If our denomination should be kept from disunion, and the blessing of God should be continued as it has been for the last twenty years, in 1848 there will be at least 5,000,000 of persons under the care of the General As-

sembly; for we have more than doubled in numbers in the last twenty years.

"Two thirds of the colleges, theological seminaries, and other academic institutions in this country are under the control of Presbyterians. The Congregational churches of New England and the Presbyterian church together have the charge of more than *three fourths* of all these fountains of literary influence.

"Baptist and Methodist churches in the United States, contain not far from 1,500,000 people in each; but they are comparatively poor, and contain a larger proportion of slaves than other denominations."

In the judgment of charity Dr. Ely counts *fifteen* disobedient to *one* obedient member in the Presbyterian church. Our *body* (with fifteen dead to one living member) says he, amounts to 2,194,620. Under the divine blessing, adds he, if the Lord keep us "from disunion," in twenty years "*our body*" will amount, in these United States, to 5,000,000. What a dangerous church will this Presbyterian church yet be! Embracing, as she expects in twenty years, nearly *one third* of all the carnal, worldly, and selfish sinners in the land, should she take it into her head to make a king or a "*long parliament*," what could hinder her?

Richard M. Johnson, Esq. and such men, who will not, by act of congress, sanctify the *first* day of the week, or make a *Jewish Sabbath* of it, will have to seek some new country, if they wish to wear their heads. For my part, I would as lief live a door neighbour to the Spanish *spiritual* court of Inquisition, as live next door to a council of such spirits as the Editor of the "*Pandect*," [a Presbyterian paper printed at Cincinnati.]

But this is not all. Dr. Ely says they have two thirds of all the colleges and fountains of learning and literary influence under their *control*. Yes; remember the word *control*. And two thirds of the *money* also. For, he says, the two great sects, the Methodists and Baptists, are "*poor*." The Presbyterian church with *one third* of all the sinners, *two thirds* of all the colleges, and *two thirds* of all the money, my



friends, be assured, will one day, some twenty years hence, make you take off your hats, and "stop your coaches." I do know it to be a fact, which all history and experience prove, that a society professing any religion, with the control of colleges, population, and money, will be adored, if they have such a proportion of "baptised infidels" among them as gives to them a ponderosity of fifteen to one. I do not think that all his "*communicants*" are saints either. If the half of them were saints, we would have something to hope from so much *salt* in so dead a carcass. But we have no good reason to think that more than a half of the *communicants* are real christians. If so, then, on Dr. Ely's data, we would have thirty to one.

I never saw, from a *Protestant* pen, so proud, so supercilious, so arrogant a display, as this same report of Dr. Ely! Numbers, literature, wealth, arrayed against poverty, "ignorance," and paucity. The Presbyterian sect is as two to one against all the sects in the country, by such a happy combination of literature, money, and numbers.

If I had not other data before my mind, and a different view of religious statistics, than Dr. Ely presents, I would really give up the contest and the ship, and sigh for the destiny of both church and state. But as things are, I do not despair.

[From the *N. Y. Morning Courier*.]

By inserting the following *hint* in your *independent* paper, you will oblige a subscriber—

The good old proverb says that "*example* is better than *precept*." Observing, in passing up Broadway between eleven and twelve o'clock yesterday, (*Sunday*) a great number of *carriages* standing before the *churches*, some of them attended by *two* servants, I had the curiosity to inquire the names of the owners of several of those equipages, many of which I recollect among the subscribers to the "Memorial to

Congress to stop the transportation of the mail on Sunday." Would it not be more consistent in these worthies (including also some of the *clergy*) if they would *walk* with their families to their respective places of devotion, and recommend their servants to follow their example, instead of requiring their horses and servants to *work* on that *holy day*; and thus deprive the latter of the privilege of going to *any* place of worship? If a regular performance of this sacred duty be indispensable to the salvation of any one, it must consequently be to that of the other, as the creator makes no distinction between the *rich* and *poor*, the *master* and his *servant*—being "no respecter of persons." Q.

#### *Prophetic Discussion in England.*

It seems a Conference is held once a year in England, by various ministers and people, for discoursing on prophetic subjects. Among those under discussion at the late annual meeting, were the structure of the Apocalypse, and the Signs of the Times, as connected with unfulfilled prophecy. The sentiments of the Conference, as given in a respectable journal, are as follows:—

"Amidst the variety of sentiment which was expressed as to the period of the Millennium, there was one point, in which all, with one voice, concurred; we mean, in the certainty that judgments must first come on the earth; that these judgments will be, while they last, of a most awful and portentous character; and that it seems probable that they will begin with the Protestant nations, as having been the most favored."

[From the *N. Y. Telescope*.]

Mr. Editor,—In a Boston publication I read the following article:

"*An Uncommon Trick*.—It is said that an artful Yankee girl has procured money enough to buy her an elegant Piano Forte, by means of a *genteel Missionary Box*."

I would venture the question, Is this the *only* instance where money, which has been raised by means of a *missionary box*, has been squandered by individuals pre-

fessing to be engaged in that labour! I think I recollect hearing of some several instances in which these donations have been appropriated to the personal *decoration* of some of these labourers in the cause.

B.

#### *Exhibition of Religious Sentiments.*

A correspondent of the Connecticut Mirror, (a missionary paper, printed at Hartford) in writing upon the question, "Whether it is possible that any should be saved who live and die without having heard of the Christian Scriptures or of Jesus Christ," says:

"The heathen who are altogether destitute of the instructions of the Scriptures, are *literally* in a lost condition and *must* perish." "A Saviour of whom no tidings have been communicated, is, to those thus ignorant, no Saviour." "The heathen, without the knowledge of Christ, must die in their sins."

"Dreadful indeed," says a western paper, "must the influence of that superstition be, that can induce a sane mind deliberately to put forth sentiments like these!"

#### ADDITIONAL FACTS.

A writer in the Boston Trumpet, in a letter addressed to an orthodox clergyman, says, "If you have been charged with desiring a state religion, have you not given people occasion to say so? Your plans and schemes have indicated as much; and Dr. Ely, who seems to have been born with his heart too near his tongue, has revealed it. Your late application to Congress, proves you wish legislation in your religion. But, sir, a number of years ago, a celebrated doctor of your sect, declared to me, *that religion in this country was but ill provided for, but he hoped an established religion, similar to that in Scotland, would in time be obtained.*"

[Communicated from Dauphin county, Pa.]

Believing it to be a duty incumbent on every friend to civil and religious liberty in this country, to be up and doing in these days of clerical ambition, and to show the danger with which we are threatened, I send you the following statement:

In the fall of 1826, a Presbyterian minister who preaches about fourteen miles from Harrisburg, finding I had a judgment of my own, and would not accede to his views, said to me with some warmth—"We will not get religion to thrive properly in this country, until we get it supported by law." Meaning, I presume,

that such heretics as me, who could not conscientiously, and would not on mere clerical authority, voluntarily submit to the dogmas of a hired priest, would then be compelled to do it by the force of law.

SAMUEL ALLEN.

#### UNTOWARD SYMPTOMS.

A collision or misunderstanding has taken place between the *Board of Missions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church* and the officers of the *American Home Missionary Society*. An attempt was lately made to *amalgamate* these two orthodox bodies, but it only tended to widen the breach and increase the misunderstanding between them. Both bodies have been issuing their "Circulars." In that of the Executive Committee belonging to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, dated February 25, 1829, is the following language: "The tranquility and peace of the Board of Missions, [of the Presbyterian Church] and of its numerous friends, have again been disturbed by an elaborate circular, which was issued from the American Home Missionary Society on the fifth of the present month." To allay the excitement and heal the breach which has been made, the attempt at amalgamation has been abandoned by the American Home Missionary Society.

The *Reading (Pa.) Chronicle*, of March 24, states that the Rev. Charles G. Finney, was on Friday last elected *Constable* of the borough of Reading. He has been intently engaged the last three months, in endeavours to reform the moral and religious habits of that borough. The reason or excuse given for his election, is "a desire of exhibiting a specimen of the manner in which the duties of the office would be performed by a *religious incumbent.*"

[Delaware Register.]

Lorenzo Dow is publishing some numbers in the New-London Gazette, addressed to the inhabitants of Connecticut. From the tenor of his second number, it appears he is apprehensive that principles of feudal government may take root in this country. A work of his is advertised as in the press, entitled "Omnifarious Laws Exemplified," &c.

[Connecticut paper.]

The Reformer is printed on the first of each month, at one dollar a year. Letters to be addressed and payment made, to T. R. GATES, Proprietor and principal Editor, No. 290, North Third Street, Philadelphia. Numbers can be supplied from the commencement of the work.